

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Eric. S. Hyman on 12 December 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 21 has been amended to the following final form:

--A pipe coupling comprising:

a single gasket,

a resilient mounting ring made of a flexible material and having a split and

a circular recess in said resilient mounting ring for receiving the gasket,

and

a mounting flange having a cone shaped inner surface, wherein the mounting ring is elastically expandable and is integrally formed with an outer cone-shaped surface, said outer cone-shaped surface complementary to said cone shaped inner surface, and with an inner rib, wherein the rib fits into a circumferential groove formed in a first pipe upon elastically expanding the ring over the first pipe to hold the ring affixed to the first pipe, wherein the pipe coupling connects the first pipe to a counter-flange associated with a second pipe in a sealed manner when the ring is tightened towards the counter-flange,

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whereby said single gasket abuts said first pipe and abuts said resilient mounting ring in use.--

In claim 33, line 2, the term --outer-- has been inserted immediately prior to the phrase "cone-shaped surface".

In claim 35, the phrase "claim 34" has been replaced by the phrase --claim 21--.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to claim 21, the closest prior art of Manton (U.S. 3,652,110) discloses the claimed pipe coupling with the exception of the mounting ring having a split (as recited in claim 21, line 3, as presented above) and whereby the single gasket abuts the first pipe and abuts the resilient mounting ring in use (emphasis added as recited in claim 21, lines 14-15, as presented above). As to limitation of the mounting ring being split, the Applicant's arguments are persuasive, see page 5, lines 15-21, of the reply filed 10/13/2008 that the Manton patent fails to disclose or teach a split mounting ring. The Examiner further notes that a split in the mounting ring of Manton would result in the coupling of Manton losing the ability to create a fluid seal, i.e. a split in the mounting ring destroys the invention of Manton as taught. As to the limitation of whereby the single gasket abuts the first pipe and abuts the resilient mounting ring in use, it is deemed improper hindsight to modify the structure of the mounting ring of Manton to meet the noted limitation, since such a modification would require changing how the

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coupling of Manton functions as to sealing and the method of placement of the mounting ring of Manton on the pipe.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAY R. RIPLEY whose telephone number is (571)272-7535. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 1:30 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on 571-272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jay R Ripley/
Examiner, Art Unit 3679
12 December 2008

/James M Hewitt/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3679